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ABSTRACT

As the national war on drugs continues, children and youth are told to "just say no" but are seldom given the information and skills to sort out the mixed signals coming from peers, adults, and the mass media. This guidebook presents examples of three approaches to community "storytelling" projects through which children and youth can explore conflicting information and feelings about the use of drugs and alcohol. These examples are drawn from projects in rural, American Indian, and Alaska Native communities. Participatory research is a process in which the people affected by an issue or problem develop the information to support action. They learn new skills, undertake the necessary research, and come to their own conclusions. Activities for applying participatory research to substance abuse study include brainstorming, researching drug effects, simple surveys, community surveys, and developing a local resource guide. Cultural journalism can contribute to understanding by looking for both the roots and the cure of substance abuse within personal and collective histories. Activities include private reflection, group discussion, oral history interviews, and shaping the story in written form. Experiential writing activities encourage students to express their own experiences and must take place in a safety zone that guards confidentiality and supports the generation of ideas. This booklet contains 77 references and additional resources. (SV)

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Michael Tierney

In Our Own Words

Community Story Traditions to Prevent and Heal Substance Abuse

A Teacher's Guide with Examples From Native American and Rural Contexts

RC018918

In Our Own Words: Community Story Traditions to Prevent and Heal Substance Abuse

A Teacher's Guide With Examples From Native American and Rural Contexts

by Michael Tierney

Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools

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Have you ever been in a situation in which you felt like you can't go on? For the past year I have been through a lot of bad situations that have been about to push me over the edge. Last year after school let out I began to have a lot of family problems and guy problems. I didn't know how to handle the pressure, so I began to drink heavily.

Everytime that something would happen at home I would go to my room and get out the bottle of liquor that I had stashed in my dresser. I'd sneak it out of the house and go walking in the woods to where nobody could see me. I would drink as much as I could and then usually I would get sick and pass out. I would sober up a little bit and then go back home.

During the times that these problems were at their worst, I never had anyone to talk to. That was the worst thing about it all. Sometimes I think that if there was anyone to open up to that maybe I would have stayed away from drugs.

—Carla, age 17

In our county the Sheriff's Department has Deputy Dog. Deputy Dog says, "Just say 'no' to drugs." Did anyone ever bother to ask the kid why he wanted to take drugs to start with? Or why do you want the alcohol? Maybe that's the only thing you've got, maybe it's his only way out. I just have a hard time with Deputy Dog. Why doesn't he say, "What's your problem, kid? How can I help you? How can our world help you achieve what you want to or feel better about yourself?"

—A Parent

A Family Cries Out

Drinks and drugs,
I have seen what they have done,
Daddies hitting their sons.
Drinks and drugs come every season,
Slapping mother for no reason.
Destroying things and breaking glasses,
Brothers and sisters failing classes.
Not enough sleep this night,
Two people in a fight.
Brothers and sisters with a lot of fear,
Only one can hold back their tears.
Mother on her hands and knees,
Begging him to please make peace.
Sister hollering, "I hate you all,"
Brother is now calling the law.
Morning is finally here,
Daddy grabs another beer.

—Tina, an 18-year-old literacy student

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FOREWORD

In the concerted effort to combat substance abuse, we sometimes forget the sources of strength that best protect us. This guidebook aims to help teachers and youth workers access that strength with youth. Mike Tierney, the author of this guidebook, clarifies the importance of this issue well:

> The real war on drugs is won only when people fully realize they have other options, in both pleasure and despair.... [It] is doubly won when people can look to their culture not only for the roots of their problems, but for the strengths, values, and traditions upon which to build new lives.

This perception is at the heart of understanding why there are no *easy* victories to be won. We can reduce the misuse and abuse of dangerous substances by reinforcing the norms that support abstinence. But to combat the allure of easy escapism, we must cultivate understanding of the alternatives. Victories are otherwise likely to be tentative. Our care for the lives of children must reach deep into our own experience and into their experience; we *must* share—we must construct together—a vision of the good life.

That is easier said than done. Yet it is hardly out of reach. The tools presented in this guidebook are familiar to every teacher—reading, writing, and talking with one another. And, in different parts of our lives, we are, all of us, both students and teachers.

Craig Howley
Todd Strohmenger

Codirectors, ERIC/CRESS

Introduction:
Community Questions, Community Stories

As the national war on drugs continues, children are encouraged to march in parades against drugs and to sign contracts before they join sports teams. They are told to "just say no" on the playground, in the streets, and in their homes. But the message to take a stand against drugs is not necessarily accompanied by the information and skills needed to sort out the decidedly mixed signals children and youth get from peers, the adults around them, the mass media, and the conflicting desires that result from such mixed signals.

Recovering addicts understand that they must say "no" *every day*, even *every hour*, to a myriad of behaviors that might lead them to resume their active addictions. They learn that misuse and addiction grow from a complex history—their own, that of their family, that of their community—and a variety of physical and social circumstances. They know that the decision and responsibility to become and remain sober is a deeply personal one that requires an *unflinching commitment to examining their own experience*. The question of how to prevent drug abuse is never rhetorical. Each "no" or "yes" must be imbedded in understandings of ourselves and the communities in which we enact our lives.

Toward an Informed "No"

The following discussion of community storytelling projects to explore substance abuse with children and youth presumes that young people need not only to be diligent, but to understand. They need to understand the choices they are making. And they need caring adults to provide safe environments for them to explore conflicting information and feelings about the use of drugs.

I come to these beliefs from nearly 20 years of working with young

people to share stories. As a suburban teen, school newspaper editor, and student in a public alternative high school, I saw peers' lives derailed by submergence in the drug culture of the early seventies. But I also took part in a community education course that trained teens in emergency first aid to help friends in trouble with drugs, and I had friends who worked as peer drug counselors. Such a free exchange of information seems to be very difficult to nurture today.

In 1978, while an intern for the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial in Mingo County, West Virginia, I learned of *Foxfire* magazine. At the time, I was working with the Big Laurel School, a community-controlled program that educated 12 students from kindergarten to tenth grade. Their parents had split from the county system due to geographic isolation, but they also shared the conviction that self-reliance and independence were important if their children were to conduct their own lives in responsible ways.

Later, at South Boston High School, I founded and directed a program called Mosaic, which for ten years (1980-1990) provided a context for youth to explore each other's heritages and to cross generations to learn how others dealt with the challenges of coming of age. Since 1988, I have directed Step by Step, a creative expression and leadership development program for West Virginia youth, a program that has particularly attracted participants from the child welfare system. These youth share their experiences and their ideas for combatting challenges such as abuse, addiction, and callous public policies.

In each role—as friend, reporter, classroom teacher, or community group leader—I have been moved by the power of stories to help people clarify their options and goals; to make connections with people with whom they were estranged by age, race, class, or belief; and, at times, to heal. I have also learned to do what every good teacher, friend, parent or organizer does best—to steal (with acknowledgement, of course) every idea that might help someone tell the stories they hold within. I hope that the following examples will be useful to anyone who would like to help young people make their own decisions about drugs and who also believes that lasting decisions must be rooted within one's own experience.

I broadly refer to these methods as "community stories," although the techniques I review have been variously called "Participatory Research," "Cultural Journalism," and "Experiential Writing." These

are only the most clearly defined of a family of educational and communal knowledge-sharing traditions such as oral history, chataquas, parables, and other community forums that emphasize the connection between personal life and a broader issue, tradition, or world.

Like all families of substance and edges, not all members would necessarily claim to be related or to see each other in the same light as cousins. "Participatory Research" has become the tag for a broad-based movement of groups in which people master the information necessary to affect change within their own communities. "Cultural Journalism" is a phrase coined—within the Foxfire network—for the tradition of looking to one's roots in order to deepen understanding of the contemporary world. The foundations of "Experiential Writing" are certainly as old as literacy itself and as basic as a paragraph on "How I Spent My Summer Vacation."

However one looks at these community story traditions, though, it is not the *form* of the methods these traditions use that is important. Rather, it is the *beliefs of their practitioners* that make them useful in exploring an issue such as substance abuse; I am just one such practitioner. In general, my colleagues and I believe that people have the ability to make more just and more healthy decisions when they are armed with a better understanding of themselves and their world.

What This Guidebook Is, And What It Is Not

In this guidebook, I particularly cite examples from rural, Indian, and Alaska Native communities. Those of us living in the mountains, on reservations, or in the far north are not likely to have community-oriented professionals with the latest training and information on prevention and treatment. Geographic isolation and living on the economic edge compound the problems of lack of information and social services.

But these are not my only reasons for focusing on such groups. I have also found that some of the *most creative* examples of programs that involve youth and community people in addressing substance abuse come from these comparatively isolated areas and culturally distinctive circumstances.

One thing more: This guidebook is *not* an overview of specific substance abuse curricula; it is not an analysis of the many conflicting theories that deal with substance abuse among rural and, in particular, American Indians and Alaska Natives; nor is it a comprehensive

curriculum on the impact of drugs on individuals or society.[1] It *is* a way of working with young people *to help them act and think in ways that lead them to care better for themselves and others.*

I have also not discussed in depth the storytelling context most frequently used within the substance abuse field: "12-step programs" such as Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous.[2] I prefer to respect those traditions' insistence that their members themselves are most qualified to share their methods. Instead, I urge anyone committed to combatting substance abuse to attend one of those organizations' open meetings.

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[1]Most school districts, church groups, and community agencies have access to these sorts of materials. The sort of work described in this guidebook is much less common.

[2]The phrase, "12-step programs," comes from the 12 steps suggested as a "program of recovery" by Alcoholics Anonymous. Each Step demonstrates a level of awareness or a task necessary to move forward in recovery. For example, the recovery process begins with step 1—"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable." Recovering addicts reach step 4 when they have "made a searching and fearless moral inventory" of themselves (Alcoholics Anonymous, 1976, p. 59).

Creating a "Safety Zone" for Community Stories

Obviously, telling stories of the sort needed in the context of substance abuse requires tact and good judgment on the part of the teacher, and discretion and security on the part of students. This section is intended to clarify what teachers need in order to establish a safety zone for community stories.

An Assumption of Information Rights

The choice to use community story methods for substance abuse prevention and recovery implies that young people (and all others) have the following rights:

1. The right to information. This includes the means to develop research skills for discovering factual information, access to professionals who will answer their questions in a straightforward and respectful manner, and opportunities to explore the variety of theories in controversial areas such as substance abuse.

2. The right to develop their own interpretations of those facts and theories.

3. The right to develop decisionmaking skills and to be involved with the decisions that affect their lives.

4. The right to explore their own cultural heritage.

5. The right to reflect on and affirm the integrity of their own experiences and to use that as a basis for developing their own analyses and making their own decisions.

I strongly believe that commitments to uphold the first four rights among young people can lead to their increased capacity to make

good decisions. I also believe that, regardless of their stage of development, youth must have many chances to express their understanding and opinions.

This guidebook provides suggestions for personalizing information. The point is that youth should develop bases of knowledge and decisionmaking skills rooted in their personal experiences and in the experiences of the communities in which they live. These are strategies and techniques that can be integrated into existing curricula, so that youth and adult helpers can make their own assessments of materials and theories.

A Diversity of Opinions

Dr. Willard E. Bill, former director of the Office for Equity Education for the state of Washington, in *Substance Abuse and the American Indian,* provides a good overview of literature and a bibliography of articles and curriculum referenced in the ERIC database. (See the resource section for more information on this publication and on the ERIC database).

Dr. Bill cites eight theories (Bill, 1989, p. 10) that attempt to explain the Indian mode of drinking. This is his outline of those theories:

1. **Defiance to prohibition theory**: American Indians and Alaska Natives were prohibited from drinking alcohol until 1953. This prohibition resulted in the Indian developing unhealthy attitudes toward drinking that transferred to an overindulging pattern once the drinking was made legal.

2. **Lack of drinking norms theory**: The Public Health Service stated as recently as 1969 that Indians have not been drinking long enough to develop the social norms which result in moderate alcohol drinking habits.

3. **Cultural disruption theory**: Dozier, Whitaker, Daily, and Reifel all point to the fact that the federal government seriously disrupted the Indian culture through the Contact Period. Dozier referred to the cultural disruption as a "cultural invasion." The resultant breakdown in cultural controls along with the disruption of the tribe, band, or clan are causative factors in the rate of Indian alcoholism.

4. **Government paternalism theory**: This theory is closely linked to the cultural disruption theory in which the American Indian was subjugated by the military, forced to become dependent on the federal government, humiliated, and subjected to the political climate of the day. All of these factors have contributed to the Indians' overuse of alcohol.

5. **Drinking celebration theory**: The idea behind this theory is that drinking alcohol surrounds festive occasions, similar to that of non-Indian culture.

6. **Perpetuation of drinking practice theory**: This theory contends that the Indian overindulges and does not adapt to a more moderate social style of drinking.

7. **Curative theory**: The belief among some Indians that alcohol has certain powers of healing health problems.

8. **Permissiveness theory**: This theory states that the cultural factor which allows an individual Indian to drink results in behavior that leads to alcoholism.[3]

I refer you to Dr. Bill's excellent resource package for further discussion of the cause, prevention, and treatment of substance abuse among American Indians.[4] I cite his outline here simply to underscore *the diversity of theories about the causes of substance abuse.* This list particularly illustrates the point that abuse exists in a complex context. The forces at work in that context make their own contributions to the dilemma.

Each individual teacher, youth group leader, and institution will have to decide such things as:

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[3]The outline summarizes a paper by Fenton E. Moss, "Cultural Theories on the Causation of Indian Alcoholism," University of Utah, Western Regional Indian Alcoholism Training Center, 1970.

[4]Dr. Bill provides both an excellent bibliography on substance abuse and American Indians and a good model of how to pull together a resource package (including overview of literature, questions to ask at the community level, state resource people, a summary of laws relating to substance abuse, and other resources.) It is available through ERIC, as noted in the reference list and in the resource section.

- the specific content of discussions of theory,
- how broadly to cast the discussion of addictive behavior, and
- how to help students build the skills to analyze theories and information they will encounter long after leaving a particular class or workshop.

Similarly, the responses to substance abuse—forms of treatment and models of abstinence or responsible use of legal, addictive substances such as tobacco and alcohol—will vary from community to community.

The task of acknowledging and dealing with the difference between young people's experience and that of the adults from whom most addiction research is drawn makes this diversity of theory, context, and treatment more complex still. Medical and psychological experts and 12-step program veterans disagree on phenomena such as binge drinking and the question of whether one can be a heavy drinker as an adolescent and sustain moderate use as an adult. We *can't* expect young people to settle on a single way of understanding drug misuse and addiction in short order. We *can* expect them to evolve their positions over a lifetime of experience. And there is much we can do, as teachers and youth workers, to help them deal with that experience wisely.

Ethical Concerns and Responsibilities

Encouraging young people to reflect on their own experience opens tremendous opportunities. For this very reason, it also implies a range of moral concerns and responsibilities that must be clearly understood by both adults and the youth involved.

The process of clarifying those concerns can itself be an occasion for developing young people's reflection, communication, research, and decisionmaking skills. But these issues must be discerned as the project begins so that those understandings can serve as the ground rules for the sharing that follows. To establish ground rules, three principles apply:

1. Participants must create a safety zone of confidentiality and trust.
2. Participants must be clear about the legal and moral limits to confidentiality.

3. Participants must understand their obligation to refer one another for further help.

Creating a safety zone. Issues such as substance abuse can involve personal trauma, family confidences, and legal complications. Alcoholics Anonymous' tradition of preserving privacy—not taking what is shared in a room outside that room—is a good one to follow in raising such issues for discussion among youth. The adult helper may want to suggest that certain kinds of sharing occur in writing where it is easier to preserve confidentiality than in open discussion. When stories are shared through writing, it should be understood that those stories will not be shared in any other context without the author's consent.

Being clear about the limits to confidentiality. No one can, or should, guarantee *unlimited* confidentiality. For example, adults are required by law to report suspected incidents of sexual or physical abuse of children.

Rules pertaining to knowledge of substance abuse, however, tend to be less clear. Most states have specific regulations prohibiting possession of alcohol by a minor, although parents usually have the right to regulate alcohol consumption within the home. There are laws against supplying liquor to minors, and penalties for certain actions, such as driving, under the influence of drugs. Other kinds of abuse (e.g., sniffing glue or aerosols) are not governed by specific legal regulation. Nonetheless, particular institutions and groups such as schools, sports teams, and other youth groups frequently have their own rules and impose their own consequences for substance abuse. Adults who encourage discussion of these issues must be clear about what *they must* and what they *will* do with that information.

Having the youth group or classroom set its own code of confidentiality can be one of the most effective ways of illuminating the moral concerns and having participants "buy into" their own responsibilities to other members of the group. Both rural and urban youth, in my experience, understand the limits of confidentiality. Further, they can translate the legal complexities surrounding this issue into everyday principles. Youth can be expected to understand and act on the need to report undisclosed cases of abuse and neglect, as well as to report situations where a young person is in physical danger—as, for example, when expressing suicidal tendencies.

Understanding the obligation to seek help. Most teachers, youth group leaders, parents, and other adult helpers have received extremely limited training in substance abuse treatment. It is important that they recognize their own lack of knowledge and where to go for further support in their locale. When adult helpers frankly discuss their own lack of knowledge, youth tend to do what they can for themselves and their peers, but also to feel more comfortable in reaching out for help when they need it.

Researching sources of help can also become a youth group or classroom activity. Adults can share that responsibility, as well as their own initial ignorance and frustrations at the difficulty in locating services. This way, youth will become better judges of the real accessibility of those services to young people in need. If inquiries reveal a severe shortage of youth-oriented services, as is often the case in rural areas, the shortage itself can be a basis for discussion of societal attitudes about substance abuse and the priorities regarding social supports in rural or impoverished areas of the nation. Discovering service gaps can also provide opportunities for youth to mount their own public awareness and education campaigns.

Community Story Traditions: OVERVIEW

Community stories can provide a looking glass, a different framework through which we can reflect on the facts of *our own* lives. Some of the methods I discuss in the next three sections for sharing community stories have been associated more commonly with adults than with youth. Others have been practiced in classrooms and youth groups with great success, but have tended to focus on subjects less controversial than substance abuse. In each section I will discuss the particular educational tradition and examples of its application, which will include at least one sample specifically focused on substance abuse.

Many of the programs I describe below could be understood as belonging within more than one of the three traditions. However, the tendency of participatory research projects is to focus on the macro world of political issues. Cultural journalism tends to emphasize community heritage; and experiential writing tends to reflect a deeply personal interpretation of events. But there are many overlaps. For instance, much good participatory research is rooted in first-person narrative, and much experiential writing in journals, for example, begins with an "I" but looks outward toward the wider world. Whatever method a teacher or youth leader begins with, therefore, should be based on what the particular class or youth group is like.

The case might be made that discussions of issues such as abuse should start with personal reflection, only later moving to the outer world of facts and laws and community patterns. But such choices should be made on the basis of the temperament, trust, and prior work of any particular classroom or group. This guidebook concludes with resource bibliographies on the three principal varieties of community storytelling. These resources should help you decide which approach—or combination of approaches—might be appropriate for the groups with which you work.

Community Story Traditions, Part I: PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

Participatory research, put simply, is a process in which the *participants*—the people affected by an issue, problem, or concern—develop the information to support action. They learn new skills, undertake the necessary research, and come to their own conclusions. Many people, in fact, are reluctant to rely on experts for information, for the interpretations of fact and theory, or for recommending action about matters that affect their lives. Participatory research is a good alternative for such people. According to a publication by the Participatory Research Network, this methodology strives to play a liberating role in the learning process by promoting the development of a critical understanding of social problems, their structural causes and possibilities for overcoming them. It does not claim to be neutral. As a research approach, it calls for democratic interaction between the researchers and those among whom the research is conducted. (Participatory Research Network, 1982, p. 1)

Participatory Research Methods

At its most basic, participatory research entails people gaining access to information usually available only to experts. Such work involves acquiring new skills that help people break down barriers of professionalism, or it could mean new interpretations of knowledge culled from people's day-to-day lives.

For example, people who were living near a dump might question the safety of some of the substances being left in a landfill. The most passive response would be to assume that there were no problems, or to feel that people not trained in chemistry were not capable of judging the situation. People who were concerned about potential dangers, but still uncertain as to their own abilities to investigate the situation, might call a government agency.

As part of a participatory research project, however, community members might undertake their own research efforts. They could ask the company doing the dumping what chemicals were being dumped. They might research what other materials the company works with or produces. They might research the effects of those chemicals on their own, or they might call in outside expertise to interpret that data. But throughout further stages of uncovering and using information, use of professional expertise is a resource to be called on as needed. Part of what participatory research does is to safeguard the right of community members to make their own decisions.

Participatory research has frequently been identified with social movements. In this country the Highlander Research and Education Center has worked with community groups to develop their own investigations of chemical waste dumps and occupational safety standards, and also to interpret their own place in changing economic conditions. Many case studies about participatory research are available, particularly in programs of popular education in the third world.

The common ground of all such projects is the belief that people can interpret and apply sophisticated information from the foundation of their own experience. This viewpoint does not mean that there is no place for "outside" experts, people with specialized academic training or long-term experience in a particular field. But the role of those experts is fundamentally different from what it is in typical programs of research. Rather, experts are seen as resources and, at times, partners in efforts to uncover information, develop understanding, and formulate action plans that are *collectively owned and accessible* to people with a wide range of educational backgrounds.

The Participatory Research Network (1982) discusses some of the many methods of participatory research and their uses:

1. *Group discussions* serve as a way to "pose problems, identify causes, discuss possible solutions and evaluate actions," as well as bring to the surface the expertise and experience that already lies within the group.

2. *Public meetings* can be used to "inform the constituency about the research as it progresses" as well as involve more people in the research process and ensure the broader group's sense of ownership and approval of the direction the project takes.

3. *Research teams* are used to allow the consideration of other expertise (e.g., professional or academic expertise), but also to ensure shared

responsibility for the project and the accessibility of information developed by the project.

4. *Open-ended surveys* help gather information about how a wider range of people view an issue or experience a problem.

5. *Community seminars* provide opportunities for focused discussion, intensive skills development, or the sharing of information among a wider range of participants.

6. *Fact-finding tours* allow participants to compare their experiences with those of others in varying degrees of similar or different circumstances. Visiting another community and seeing how it addresses the same issue is one possibility, as is writing other groups and exchanging information through the mail. But participants might also undertake "fact-finding" among constituencies present in their larger community (that is, outside their own institutional, geographic, or project setting). Young people interviewing their elders about how they faced similar concerns or how they see those concerns having changed over time can be another form of "tour" within one's own community.

7. *Communicating newly gathered information* is an important part of participatory research because it helps focus understanding and builds the community awareness that is usually one of the goals of a participatory research project. (Production of publications, videos, and radio shows will be further discussed in the "Cultural Journalism" section of this guidebook.)

Other methods cited by the Participatory Research Network (1982) include popular theater and other performance art, and educational camps that provide opportunities for a group to develop its own community of education, skills, and experience sharing for a period of several days.

At its very broadest, participatory research can encompass all the methods and goals discussed in this guidebook—though its principal focus is on investigating issues and reporting results accessibly in order to empower action. Its techniques embrace many time-tested classroom practices. For example, any group discussion that affirms the value of information people have gathered from their own expe-

rience, many cooperative research projects, or an investigative journalism piece for a school newspaper could be conducted as part of a participatory research project.

For the purpose of discussing the application of participatory research to the issues of substance abuse, I will focus on examples that show young people developing skills and gathering information that ordinarily they would have gotten from teachers, the media, or health or other professionals.

Applying Participatory Research to Substance Abuse Study

In order to build an analysis from one's own experience, students need to be confident that their own experience matters, and, in some cases, they need to be reminded that they have even *had* experiences or ideas. In the typical group setting, some individuals will be more articulate and confident. This circumstance can make it more difficult for less articulate individuals to have access to their own experience. Setting a climate in which everyone has an opportunity to speak, and where they do not fear that their experience or ideas will be "put down" in comparison to others', is an *essential first step* in any of the activities that follow.

Activity 1: Brainstorming

Brainstorming is one of the most basic techniques teachers know for getting discussion going, gauging the information and concerns already present in the room, and giving even the shiest participant an opportunity to contribute without fear of judgment.

A particular question or concern is put before the group. Participants are invited to offer their ideas in short form—words, phrases—and someone puts them on a blackboard or large sheet of paper for the entire group to keep in mind. Elaboration of those ideas or comments on any particular idea's merit are withheld until the brainstorming process is complete. In order to keep a few people from dominating the process, participants can be limited to contributing one or two ideas, or each participant can take a turn offering ideas. The important underlying rules of a brainstorming session are that everyone has an opportunity to offer an idea and that no idea is considered too small or unimportant for consideration.

For example, a group could brainstorm different kinds of addiction about which they know very little or others about which they already

have some information. The list might include examples such as tobacco, alcohol, food, sex, and various prescription and illegal drugs.

In this participatory research application, the next step involves focusing ideas generated by the group into a research or discussion agenda. This might be done with the whole group, but I recommend that some individual written work precede any group work.

For example, participants might be asked to write down the three forms of addiction that they have seen most often in their community, the three they would most like to learn about, or the three they most fear. In this way, even those who do not contribute to the initial discussion will consider and claim ownership of some of the ideas under consideration.

This application of brainstorming is one way to begin a participatory research project. Moreover, the written portion of the exercise can be presented to the group as an initial information-gathering exercise, a simple example of ways people gather information.

Brainstorming can be a self-contained exercise, of course. Ideally, however, such an exercise can be used to generate other research tasks for individuals and groups. The next section provides one example—assessing the effects of particular substances. Consult the other activities for additional ways to build on this beginning.

Activity 2: Researching Drug Effects

The suggestions provided in this section are based on the work of an organization that has developed useful drug safety rules. The rules can help to structure participatory research projects that gather information about the effects of particular substances.

This organization is Mothers Against Misuse and Abuse (MAMA). MAMA's materials underscore the proliferation of all kinds of drugs, both illegal and legal, in the past forty years. The organization bases its work on the view that the growth in kinds and numbers of drugs has not been matched by a similar growth in youths' knowledge and use of decisionmaking skills, skills that would reduce drug misuse and abuse. Though not "officially" a participatory research effort, much of MAMA's work reflects the outlook of such efforts—helping people *get the information they need to make decisions for themselves.*

MAMA was founded in 1982 to provide a broad coverage of drug misuse and abuse issues involving both legal and illegal drugs. Its statement of purpose follows (MAMA, n.d.):

1. To provide current, scientific drug education to all ages of society.

2. To offer individual and family-oriented alternatives to drug use.

3. To create critical lines of communication between law enforcement, educators, service providers, parents and youth.

4. To question the Madison Avenue techniques of advertising over-the-counter drugs, alcohol, and tobacco...and their affects on our entire population.

Under the sponsorship of MAMA, Mark A. Miller (1985, p. 4), of the University of Oregon Drug Information Center, has produced a pamphlet that provides drug consumer safety rules. These rules could serve as a model for a number of participatory research projects to ensure that young people have the skills they need to gather information and make decisions. These rules do not make a distinction between illegal and legal drugs but uniformly emphasize:

> There is no such thing as a "safe" drug. All drugs produce side-effects, and on occasion can produce dangerous adverse reactions. All drugs can potentially produce an overdose or may interact with other drugs being taken. Thus the rules are merely a means of REDUCING RISK.

Effects of drugs and alcohol: Where to begin? The rules outlined by Miller provide the basis for questions to gain the information that any medical professional should have before prescribing a drug or recommending a nonprescription remedy, but which most people actually ingesting the substance lack. The rules are applicable to *any* substance.

In the pamphlet, Miller (1985, pp. 5-13) provides a thorough explanation of each of the rules, which could serve both as the basis for group discussion and for research tasks. The seven rules are:

- *Rule 1. Determine the chemical being used.* Finding out the exact chemicals being used in brand name or generic drugs or the real ingredients of street drugs can be accomplished through a variety of sources: pharmacists, doctors, health centers, substance abuse hotlines, and so forth.

- *Rule 2. Determine receptor sites in the body.* Where does the drug go once ingested? Where will its effects take place?

- *Rule 3. Determine the correct dosage.* Miller notes the importance of body weight in relation to the main and side effects produced by different dosages of drugs. He recommends the general public learn the dosage in relation to body weight (mg/kg) standard for each drug.

- *Rule 4. Determine whether there will be drug interactions.* The deadliness of sleeping pills taken with alcohol is well known, but the effects of caffeine, muscle relaxants, and other substances when mixed with other drugs are less well known.

- *Rule 5. Determine if there will be allergic reactions.* From information gathered in response to these first five rules, one can begin to make a more informed assessment about whether or not the desired (or "beneficial") effects of the substance outweigh its possible risks. In the case of prescription drugs, "medical professionals are legally liable if unable to show clear benefits that outweighed the risks of side-effects and adverse reactions" (Miller, 1985, p. 7). Miller recommends that the general public apply the same standard in all drug use decisions.

If the decision is made to use the drug, the following rules would determine its continued use:

- *Rule 6. Determine if there will be drug tolerance.* Will the body build up a tolerance for the drug so that increased amounts will be required to produce the desired affects?

- *Rule 7. Determine if the drug will cause physical dependence.*

Participatory research tasks: Examples based on the rules. These rules provide rich opportunities for encouraging young people to seek their own information. Each rule can be a point of inquiry on a particular drug, legal or illegal, and an opportunity for youth to learn how to obtain accessible reliable information.

A teacher or youth group leader might prepare a list of accessible community resources such as cooperative medical professionals,

health clinics, and substance abuse centers from which participants can choose to obtain information on particular substances. Or the group might brainstorm possible organizations and then make those contacts themselves, more exactly testing the organizations' accessibility to inquiry from a young person.

Youth might also be encouraged to examine their own drug histories and to research the bearing of each of the seven rules on prescriptions they have been given. Or they might ask the same questions about illegal drugs (or legal, but potentially misused substances such as inhalants) that are currently being used by their peers.

Activity 3: Simple Surveys

The preceding activity points up the fact that students need techniques to structure their investigations. Surveys are an option that are within reach of most youth. Surveys need not be elaborate, but the more familiar youth become with constructing, administering, and interpreting the information they gather, the more confident they will become in seeking and using information.

Surveys also give students the chance to think more systematically about the world around them. A research team might, for example, think about the kinds of questions to ask, how best to phrase the questions, which groups of people to survey and for what reason, and how to present results. Finally, as they become more sophisticated in doing such work, youth might—with help from a knowledgeable adult—begin to think about more challenging issues, such as developing and testing hypotheses.

For the purposes of this discussion, however, a simple example will suffice. In West Virginia, as part of the Step by Step program (which will be discussed further in the Community Writing section of this guidebook), one young woman developed the following survey, on her own, and asked for her teacher's cooperation in distributing it to a sample population. The surveys were completed anonymously in high school and junior high classrooms. Her questions included:

How old are you?

Where do you like to hang out?

Why?

Where would you like to hang out?

Do you drink (alcoholic beverages)?

If yes, why? How often? Where do you obtain alcohol?

Do you smoke cigarettes? If yes, for how long?

Have you ever used (or tried) any illegal (or unprescribed) substances?

If so, what? How often?

Respondents ranged from 13 to 17 in age and, of course, gave varied answers. Most had consumed alcoholic beverages. Most did not smoke on a regular basis. About one third had tried some illegal substance. Respondents obtained alcohol from older friends and relatives. Frequency of use ranged from having tried something once to using it regularly, several times per week.

While hardly a scientific study, the student's survey did provide information to put her own and other individual youth's personal experience in a broader context. Somewhat more elaborate surveys, however, can serve a function in the wider community, as illustrated in the next activity.

Activity 4: Community Research Survey

In May 1986, *New Youth Connections: The Newsmagazine Written by and for New York Youth* published a special report on crack cocaine that included basic youth-researched information on the substance, a poem, a general-interest feature, and a summary of interviews with 73 individuals (28 of whom used crack), as well as an interview with eight crack dealers. A survey effort like this one requires more preparation and coordination than a simple survey.

Questions presented to crack users included the following:

- How does it make you feel? (Answers included "alive," "stupid high," "bugged," and "paranoid.")
- What does it make you do and feel? (Responses included "feel horny," "think about more," "feel tired," and "makes me want to quit.")
- What other drug have you used?
- Do you think you can stop using crack today?

Non-users' responded to questions such as:

- Why don't you use crack? (Nineteen of 45 respondents said it was dangerous to their health; and 10 reported that they did not take any drugs.)
- Do you know someone who uses crack? (Thirty-one respondents answered "yes")
- Do you have any friends who use crack? (Twenty-two respondents said "yes.")
- Have they changed since they've been using it? (Fifteen of 22 respondents said "yes.")
- Have you used any drugs?
- What were they?

The eight crack dealers who were interviewed were asked about the ages of their customers, how long they planned to deal, and questions about the drug itself.

Activity 5: Resource Guide

Even people who firmly believe that they will never abuse drugs themselves will probably have a loved one—family member or friend—who *will* encounter problems with substance abuse at some time during life. To address this circumstance, a participatory research project could involve youth in developing a resource guide. Such a guide would profile services and information available locally and through toll-free state, regional, or national hotlines.

Such a project can be a sobering experience. Hotlines frequently close down, and there may be very few youth-oriented services in a rural area. Adult helpers can provide some initial contacts themselves or suggest strategies and resources—such as school counselors, county health nurses, and directories of toll-free telephone numbers available from the local library—through which youth can discover those resources themselves.

A project like this helps youth develop the skills to find support in any number of crisis situations. But it also provides a chance for youth to assess how seriously public service institutions are willing to consider their questions and respond to youth needs. Thus, a possible

outcome of developing a resource guide could be a further project to assess service needs in a given locality.

Practical Lessons for Students Involved in Participatory Research

The ability to approach professionals as partners in a common quest, rather than as experts to be relied upon, can be one of the most valuable and challenging legacies of a participatory research project. Human services workers are often overworked, and, in some parts of the country (for example, in rural areas and on some Indian reservations) they simply do not occupy key positions. Some may have little training in responding to youth (or other people in the community who, like youth, may not be comfortable or well-versed in seeking information.) Some contacts may question the ability of people to engage in the sorts of activities characteristic of participatory research. Therefore, when working with young people, I always warn them to expect roadblocks. Specifically, I encourage them *not to take the first ten "no's" for an answer*. Roadblocks come with the turf, and learning to persevere is a lesson most of us need to learn.

Of course, knowing whom to ask and what to ask *for* is an important first step. This knowledge can save much time and energy that would otherwise be wasted.

In *Protecting Youth from Alcohol and Substance Abuse: What Can We Do?* (Bennett & Gale, 1989), the Native American Development Corporation, a nonprofit organization wholly owned and controlled by Native Americans, provides a particularly fine discussion of what different persons within a community can offer in the fight against substance abuse. This pamphlet includes chapters on using help from parents and family, school personnel, social service providers, physical and mental health care providers, the court, and law enforcement personnel. There are also chapters on some of the specific issues within tribal communities regarding substance abuse and the role of tribal government.

While circumstances will differ from place to place (and from tribe to tribe), the suggestions this group offers on how each sector of the community can play a role in the fight against substance abuse, provides a good *frame of reference* for distinguishing resources in *any* community. Sometimes it is unclear just what school, social service personnel, parents or others see as their roles in such efforts. In this

case, a community survey asking those individuals to interpret what they have to offer can itself be a valuable exercise.

At the end of a participatory research project, students should:

- value the information they already have from their own experience and education.

- feel more comfortable in approaching other sources of information—be it a copy of the *Physician's Desk Reference*, the reference section of a library, a counselor, or a health clinic—to obtain the information they need.

- realize that they don't have to get stuck alone. They can always look for other sources and to each other for encouragement, ideas, and basic facts.

Factual information on the effects of drugs, existing laws, and the services provided in a community are the building blocks in participatory research efforts directed at investigating substance abuse. Such a collection of facts does not by itself create a community-based *understanding* of drug use and abuse, any more than a list of dates creates an understanding of history.

For that reason, I turn in the next section of this guidebook to another tradition, cultural journalism. Teachers and youth group leaders can apply this second tradition to help youth *understand* how facts and resources are embedded within individual, family, and community life.

Community Story Traditions, Part II: CULTURAL JOURNALISM

The most famous community story project in this country is Foxfire. It began in 1967 when a frustrated first-year English teacher in Rabun Gap, Georgia—Eliot Wigginton—threw out his lesson plans in a last-ditch effort to motivate his students. Wigginton has described that experience in countless lectures and articles and in several books. According to him, six weeks after the beginning of the semester,

> I surveyed the wreckage. My lectern (that's a protective device a teacher cowers behind while giving a lecture nobody's listening to) was scorched from the time Tommy Green tried to set it on fire with his lighter—during class. Charles Henslee had already broken off the blade of his Barlow knife in the floorboards. Every desk was decorated with graffiti. My box of yellow chalk was gone, and so were the thumbtacks that held up the chart of the Globe Theater. The nine water pistols I had confiscated that very afternoon had been reconfiscated from under my nose. (Wigginton, 1972, pp. 9-10)

Wigginton reflected on what had motivated him in high school and remembered being published in a school literary magazine as a highlight. He asked the class if they wanted to start a magazine. He threw out a number of ideas, as did the students. The magazine articles that subsequently met with the greatest success dealt with researching local culture and folklore, and with such questions as why people plant by the signs of the zodiac.

Foxfire Magazine subsequently became a nationwide success, spawned a series of books (with sales in the millions), a broadway play and TV special, hundreds of other cultural journalism projects, and a growing number of Foxfire "teacher networks" across the country.

The phenomenal success of Foxfire, however, obscures the simplicity of its fundamental underpinnings:

- Young people have their own ideas about what they want to learn and how they want to learn.
- There are resources within one's own community that can be drawn upon for that learning.
- Basic skills training can be integrated into these kinds of active, personally styled projects.

While Foxfire has inspired hundreds of other publications, Wigginton is the first to discourage teachers from imposing that concept (or any "magic" Foxfire formula) on a group of young people.

Foxfire is hardly unique, however, as an approach to history and education. The past 25 years have seen a dramatic shift in historical research towards community-based studies of culture. "People's history" movements from the 1960s had a profound impact on the growing emphasis of the social studies curriculum on multicultural education. Studs Terkel—whose first book of interviews, *Division Street America*, was published the same year as the first edition of *Foxfire Magazine*—helped cultivate the interest in people's individual stories and bring this theme to the national best-seller lists.

These approaches to history have deep roots in genealogical societies, local history commemorative pamphlets, testimonies collected by abolitionists, and the various projects, slave narratives, state guides, and folklore studies of the Works Progress Administration during the New Deal (see the resource section for further information). Journalists like Terkel and projects like Foxfire took discussion of local history and heritage out of special community clubs or professional debate and into both mainstream understanding and the classroom.

Commonalities with Participatory Research

The skills and values developed in participatory research exercises are also common to cultural journalism projects. These skills and values include:

- learner-generated goals,
- mastery of research skills,
- developing one's own resourcefulness, and
- valuing one's own experience.

The value of researchers as active agents in the discovery of history must be passed on, as well, to the people sharing their stories. Cultural journalists are responsible for ensuring that people whose lives are being shared *have a say in how their stories are presented*. Getting written releases to use stories is only the technical level of this responsibility. A related issue concerns the need to collect descriptions of a range of experience within a particular subject area. Otherwise, cultural stereotypes may unwittingly be reinforced. And in areas of controversy (as in stories about addiction) or simply to guard privacy, projects must adequately address the issue of confidentiality. The underlying purpose of all such measures should be to prevent the exploitation of anyone involved as the subject of a cultural journalism project.

Respecting and Understanding Local Culture

With native peoples, in particular, and in rural areas generally, considerable groundwork usually needs to be laid in (1) challenging prevailing views of the local culture and (2) considering the gap between *mainstream* (or media) values and experiences and authentic *community* values and experiences.

At times, cultural journalism projects directly challenge cultural stereotypes. Foxfire students, for example, took exception to the image of mountain people as backwoods, sodomizing savages in the film *Deliverance*.[5] More often, however, projects address the gap by simply affirming cultural roots. The Foxfire-inspired books and other products provide a wide range of examples of traditional crafts and trades, as well as individual histories. For example, *The Cama-i Book* (Vick, 1983), which grew out of a series of Foxfire-type projects in Alaska, includes articles on kayaks, dogsledding, bear hunting, bush pilots, smoked fish, mukluks, and other traditions in southwestern Alaska. In recent years Alaskan teachers have also made increasing use of videotapes as a means of cultural expression, although many of those projects have emphasized process rather than finished product (and are thus not available for public viewing.)[6]

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[5]In the mid-1970s, *Foxfire* published a pamphlet of students' responses to the film and the images of the mountains it portrayed. There is also an account of Foxfire students' work to control such media images in a commercial that wanted to use Foxfire's name in the introduction of *Foxfire 3*. Finally, an account of this issue also appears in *Sometimes A Shining Moment*.

[6]Interview with Helen Merkins, health and substance abuse specialist, Alaska Department of Education, Summer 1990.

Emphasizing the instructional importance of the process—what individual students get from the experience—is a point strongly made by the Foxfire staff. Community-oriented end products, such as publications, videos, and theater, are commonly part of cultural journalism projects. The real point of such productions is, nonetheless, what students learn as they develop these products. Foxfire maintains a library of curriculum project descriptions, a small grants program, and teacher networks to facilitate the sharing of such experiences and ideas. They also plan to publish, in the early nineties, a series of curriculum guides in different methodologies.[7]

Cultural Journalism as Applied to Substance Abuse

Cultural journalism about issues such as substance abuse should not become another form of media sensationalism. Rather, the point is to understand a problem by looking for both its roots and its cure within personal and collective histories. The fear of sensationalism may be one reason cultural journalism projects have tended to avoid areas of community controversy.[8]

In recent years, however, discussions of issues such as substance abuse and suicide have increasingly become part of community history and writing projects in American Indian and Alaska Native communities. Substance abuse prevention and recovery efforts have, in turn, increasingly drawn on the rich resources of community heritage and stories.

In 1982, native elders from 40 different tribes gathered in the

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[7]Course guides on magazine production and Appalachian literature are planned for 1991, with guides on storytelling, video, radio, and music to follow in future years. In the meantime, Pam Wood's *You and Aunt Arie* is an introduction to Foxfire-type magazine production by the founder of one of the most successful ongoing cultural journalism projects (see resource section for more information).

[8]Some Foxfire-inspired projects have implemented a slightly more contemporary, issue-oriented approach. *Mosaic*, published at South Boston High School from 1980-1990, provided a forum for youth concerns over several generations, particularly in *Coming of Age in Boston: Across the Generations. I Ain't Lying* (published by Mississippi: Cultural Crossroads) and *Bloodlines* (sponsored by the Rural Organizing and Cultural Center) are publications from within Black communities in Mississippi. Both treat contemporary issues in the format of cultural journalism. (See entries in the resource section for more information about these publications.)

Northwest Territories of Canada for a conference patterned after traditional tribal councils. Their concern was the epidemic of alcohol and substance abuse that plagued native communities. As they shared their experiences, several central points emerged:

- the need to look at the whole system rather than specifically focusing on substance abuse;
- the belief that our modern-day life system was death-, not life-oriented; and;
- the view that the system as a whole had to be healed; individual and community recovery went hand in hand.

The Four Worlds Exchange emerged from that conference. Four Worlds offers curriculum development, training workshops in substance abuse treatment, and a wide range of technical assistance for specific communities.

In short, recognition of the need to deal with issues of substance abuse from the vantage of how they are embedded in the context of local culture is taking hold. Cultural journalism is an established tradition that has much to offer teachers, youth workers, and students interested in dealing thoughtfully with the issue of substance abuse prevention and healing. The following activities suggest ways to begin this work.

Activity 1: Community Circles

At the heart of a cultural journalism project is the relationship between an individual or group of participants and the community. A brainstorming exercise on participants' interests and what they already know about their community can—in cultural journalism as in participatory research—be a good start.

In reflecting on the presence of substance abuse within the community, a modified, private form of brainstorming is appropriate. One exercise I have used is that of a Community Circle. This brainstorming exercise focuses on relationships.

As a group or as individuals, youth draw (or are given) a circle in which they can reflect on the experiences of people around them. At the center of the circle is the student's own name. Around the circle are spaces to write other names (or if maintaining confidentiality is important, types of people—neighbor, relative, uncle, store owner). See Figure 1 for one example.

Figure 1. Community Circle: Addiction

In this example, I ask each participant to draw a circle that fills a sheet of paper. Then, each youth places his or her name in the center. Around the circle youth put the names of people or types of people (for example, parent, friend, neighbor) to whom a particular question might be put.

In this example, next to each name, participants list the potentially addictive substances people they know have used. They underline those instances in which abuse or misuse might be a question. As an alternative, they might list addictive behaviors—from TV watching, to cigarette smoking, to gossiping—in which they and the people in their lives indulge. The example in Figure 1 combines behaviors and substances.

From these visual displays of information, a number of writing topics can emerge. What messages does each participant get—about alcohol, drugs, sex, or eating—from the people in their lives? What habits would they personally find hard to give up, and do those habits border on addiction or dependency? Why do people think they become dependent on these behaviors or substances? In fact, the relevant questions young people might ask are endless.

An important advantage of the community circle activity—as a starting point—is that it accepts whatever information a participant

has to offer at the time of the exercise. The community circle is actually a less threatening (and more broad-based form of) a "geneagram." A model used in addiction counseling, geneagrams are constructed by having people chart the use of addiction in family trees. Tracing abuse through the family tree can also be a challenging activity, but it usually requires additional homework. The difficulty in such work is that it often puts students in the position of asking questions that family members may not be ready to answer. But as the youth leaders' familiarity and confidence with a particular group develops, this project might be useful in extending the work begun with the community circle exercise.

Activity Two: The Talking Circle

An exercise frequently used within this tradition is the Talking Circle. Participants are seated in a circle. They may begin their meeting with a warm-up activity. Groups that share a religious orientation could begin with a ceremony or ritual. Youth then are invited to share their views, one at a time, with the (unoccupied) center of the circle. No one speaks until *everyone* has had a turn to speak. This structure can be particularly helpful in a group's efforts to arrive at consensus or to build community around common ideals.[9]

An example of this technique is reported by the Rural Alaska Community Action Program (RurAL CAP). RurAL CAP has made extensive use of the Four Worlds' and other culturally-based programs' approaches to prevention and healing of substance abuse. Their newsletter, *The Emerging Eagle*, is a collection of first-person narratives, interviews, workshop descriptions, and surveys. Although produced by adults, this source provides good readings and a number of sample projects for working with youth.

The theme of the May 1990 RurAL CAP newsletter was "Elders and Cultural Resources." It included a portrait of an elder who had been sober and active in AA circles for 25 years, an interview with his wife, and the responses to a survey mailed out to elders in all the regions of Alaska. The five questions used in the survey are equally applicable for the talking circle format:

1. What do you remember as the most comical event in your life?

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[9]Interview with Michael Bopp, Director, Four Worlds Exchange, July 1990.

2. What was the most amazing experience you have had with an animal while hunting or gathering?

3. Do you have a favorite song? What are a few of the words?

4. What is one of your oldest memories?

5. What are your feelings about alcoholism and drug abuse? Do you have advice in this regard?

The questions provide opportunities for the elders to express a range of experience and wisdom. They also avoid the "either/or" trap of gathering nostalgia or dealing only with serious concerns.

The responses to drug abuse were widely varied from "Just say no," to "Kill those people who are making it," to "My advice is, though you feel you've failed, don't give up. It can be done; take one day at a time for the past is gone and each day of your life is a new day. Remember we care and [we] love you" (Elders and Cultural Resources, 1990, p. 5).

Activity Three: Oral History Interviews

Surveys and short, "person-on-the-street" interviews can help ground ideas in the breadth of experience within a community. Usually, the next step is to go for greater depth, to develop in a more thorough manner one particular person's story. A good model is the "oral history interview."

Preparing for and conducting the interview. The success of an oral history interview depends on two seemingly contradictory tasks: (1) to be sufficiently focused to pursue a particular theme and (2) to be flexible enough to let people tell their stories in their own ways.

I have seen young interviewers begin a session by plopping down, demanding that their informants "tell me a story" and, as a result, having very good interviews. In contrast, I have seen young people begin with laboriously prepared outlines but fail to elicit a single good anecdote during the actual interview. In my experience, a middle ground, depending on advance preparation and flexible expectations for the interview itself, works best.

For this purpose, some preparation is necessary. A pre-interview session, whether conducted on the phone or in person, is a good way to get basic chronological data and an idea of what the storyteller feels

most eager to offer. Explaining in advance the limited purpose of that encounter and keeping the explanation to ten minutes or less will help save the story-sharing for a time and setting when the interviewer has the right equipment, and help keep the actual interview fresh.

A broad outline of the main events in the life of the person to be interviewed and a list of two or three themes to explore in depth can be used as a checklist rather than as a set map for the conversation. Even an unskilled interviewer can ask a few more questions and get the storyteller to circle back to part of the story about which more information seems to be needed. But even the best interviewers will have difficulty recapturing an inspired anecdote if they think they must cut it off simply to follow their outlines.

Shaping the story in written form. A good interview is important to gathering the story, but shaping the story is just as important. Although some oral history projects print only the question-and-answer interviews, such stories are the kind that gather dust. An exact record of the interview is important—a complete, unedited transcript for archival purposes. But the transcript is just the first step in shaping a story.

Teachers, youth leaders, and students should realize that there is a profound difference between spoken and printed modes; not paying attention to those inherent differences would be as negligent as not fully translating from a foreign language. Studs Terkel (Terkel, 1974; cited in Newton Public Schools,1975) once said,

> Interviewing—or doing oral history—is pretty old, I mean, man spoke before he printed and published the Gutenberg Bible. Doing this kind of work, I feel like a gold prospector. I go out to the terrain, I search for the gold in people's lives. When I ask questions I am looking for the veins, and when I do my editing I am sifting for the gold. All these years of work, interviewing thousands and thousands of people all across America, have taught me one thing: the terrain is there, the veins are there, and the gold, yes gold, is generally there in all people's lives.

Terkel compiles 60 or more pages of transcript and carefully shapes information into a four- to six-page narrative. Obviously, this is exacting work.

The act of editing is a good way to help young people discern themes and discrete stories. In the days before personal computers, participants would take a typed transcript, code it for the three or four

themes that emerged most frequently in the conversation (childhood memories, adolescence, adulthood; or in an interview on substance abuse, the outline might be warning signs of addiction, active addiction, and recovery), cut the transcript apart, edit the particular themes into sections, and then retype and, perhaps, retype again.

Editing on computers makes this process somewhat less laborious. With or without word processing, however, the experience of working with the paper-copy transcript is still productive. It makes a young person's involvement with all the stages of preparing the story more tangible.

Foxfire manuals and most oral history guides offer tips on the editing process. They also include crucial information, such as how tape recorders work (see resource section for more information).

Setting the context of stories. In any oral history project, *setting stories in context* requires particular attention. Cultural journalism, after all, aims to report context through people's own stories. Determining context, then, is a critical part of any oral history project; it has to do with the purpose of cultural journalism.

Attention to setting the context can include asking certain kinds of questions, preparing frame-setting introductions for each story in a sequence, gathering supplementary material (that is, from the person being interviewed or from other sources), or simply sequencing and arranging a variety of interviews in ways that suggest the context to readers.

For example, an article on moonshining could contribute to a discussion of alcohol in the mountains, the economics of liquor, and changing societal and legal attitudes towards liquor. Or it could simply reinforce quaint stereotypes of times gone by. Stories centered around a suicide epidemic on a reservation might, for example, serve as context to help readers consider related social issues. Unmitigated, however, by discussions of ways people are addressing the crisis (or even examples of how other communities have addressed similar ills), the stories could simply perpetuate despair. Oral history projects on substance abuse, in particular, are most likely to succeed when they include stories of healing and of successful personal struggles against abuse and misuse. Recovery and healing are parts of the context that are sometimes overlooked.

Individual interviewers and project team members should attend to context before, during, and after the interview (when working with text). If more than one story is being reported (as in a group cultural

journalism project), the work team may want to consider what the context of stories is *before* interviews are actually conducted. As with actual interviews, however, interviewers should stay flexible: Actual interviews often bring out important contexts that were not evident at first.

Cultural Journalism: Helping Students Discover the Common Thread

The common thread of cultural journalism programs is that power and understanding must be rooted in the heritage from which individuals and communities have emerged. RurAL CAP's activities reflect this perspective. That organization's statement (Editorial, 1990) of the relevance of the Native Alaskan heritage is to the point:

> Traditionally, we as Native people received our strength and understanding from observing animals, the Earth and the Great Weather. The stance and look of a wolf . . . the way the Bears move and live . . . the amazing and quick energy of a Wolverine . . . and the running beauty of a Caribou. All of these sights are our joy and excitement. They are our teachers and the depth and strength of their intelligence is without comparison. We have names for all their physical characteristics, their actions and the lands and waters they chose as their own. We named our environment and theirs.
>
> Today, in these changing times, there are situations, places and feelings for which we have no names. The papers and books printed in New York or Chicago cannot very well help us to name our environment or our feelings in these changing times. But that doesn't matter. The most important thing is to realize there is great power in a name . . . .
>
> When we are in unfamiliar situations or if we are having unfamiliar feelings we need to find a name for the feelings in order to have power and understanding over them. (p. 2)

Such threads can be traced in any community and in any culture. Cultural journalism is one way to help students claim their heritage and apply its strengths to their own lives.

Community Story Traditions, Part III: EXPERIENTIAL WRITING

Projects like Foxfire have helped educators rediscover the importance of the experience of our grandparents and community forebears. By contrast, the third tradition I will discuss—experiential writing—invites people to bring the same care and respect to their own experiences. At the same time, this tradition in schools and among youth groups is part of a tendency among groups that identify themselves as a community *in order to express their own experiences.*[10]

Encouraging students to write from their own experience, of course, is hardly new. There may have been a period during which high-school-age students were discouraged from using the first person singular, but the use of journals and reflections on personal experience have long since become familiar tools among teachers nationwide.

Confidentiality and Sharing Personal Stories

As in other community story techniques, the first steps in experiential writing activities involve creating the safety zone needed for guarding confidentiality and supporting the generation of ideas. The former is *especially challenging* in this tradition, because youth are sharing their own personal experiences, rather than gathering and reporting "objective" information (as in participatory research) or the "subjective" information provided by other people (as in cultural journalism).

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[10]In Britain, many of these community-based groups have formed a national network called The Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers, which includes dozens of community groups that publish autobiographical writing, poetry, fiction and historical and other essays by "non-traditional" writers. Copies of their annotated catalog are available through Words Walking (see resource section).

In particular, youthful writers *must* be helped to think through the possible ramifications of connecting their actual names with a particular experience. They must also be confident of their ability to control *who will see their writing* (that is, to specify their audiences in advance). Sharing writing can be an important part of building a writer's confidence, but the related issues can be quite subtle. Teachers and youth workers must appreciate the subtleties. For example, a young writer may not want, at first, to share work at all. On the other hand, if students decide to share written work among members of their own group, they may want to circulate stories anonymously, they may prefer to have their stories read aloud by the teacher, or they may feel comfortable reading their own stories aloud themselves. Similar issues apply to wider audiences as well.

Publishing short excerpts of the writing of a variety of students—reproduced without names but with the authors' permission—can be a good way to affirm the authors and demonstrate vivid writing. If the safety zone of trust is well established, students can also benefit by sharing their writing in pairs or in a circle—so long as they have options when the proposed mode of sharing feels uncomfortable.

Step by Step, which I direct, is a program that provides opportunities for creative expression and leadership among West Virginia youth, particularly those involved in the child welfare system. This program draws on traditions within community education and therapeutic recovery and is cosponsored by Action Youth Care, an agency that works with young people in the child welfare systems and their families, and by Words Walking, the community publications program of the Big Laurel Learning Center. Step by Step is in the midst of developing an experiential story collection about addictions.

We hold monthly workshops in which youth discuss, write about, and plan action to address challenges they face. Our newspaper and our bi-annual collection of stories have included interviews and autobiographical writing on sexual abuse, a multi-topic collection grouped around the theme of "Youth Under Pressure," and articles and stories about what it has meant to grow up in a rural area and face limited economic options. We are also planning issues on topics such as community service—so that we do not become "the grim issue of the month club," a pitfall to avoid (as noted in the section of this guidebook devoted to cultural journalism).

In one of the first Step by Step writing workshops, a young man wrote of his experience with substance abuse and recovery:

I started drinking when I was about ten years old. I hadn't really thought about drinking before. I knew my dad drank and I thought it might be kinda fun. One of my brother's friends came to the house and asked if he was home. I said no and he asked me if I wanted to drink some beer. I said yes and we started. It tasted kind of funny at first but after a while it started tasting good. I felt real funny and I liked the feeling.

I first realized I had a problem with drinking when I started drinking beer every day. I felt I needed it to forget my problems but it only got me in trouble. It was easy to get the beer. All we had to do was get one of our friends' brothers to go to the store and buy it. When I realized that I had a drinking problem, I couldn't believe it. But I thought I'd better get some help.

The help the young man received included being assigned to an AA meeting by his probation officer. He continued, "The first time I went to a meeting I was scared because all the people there were older than me, and I didn't even have a book to read out of." He had been assigned to a "Big Book" study group (not a traditional AA meeting) in a short-term residential treatment center. It was not a productive experience.

This young man's experience underscores several ways *not* to introduce someone to story sharing as a step towards recovery. He not only lacked the tools (AA's "Big Book") and common ground with fellow participants, but there was also no opportunity to develop a sense of safe community, because he never saw the same people more than once.

At Step by Step, participants vote for projects with their feet. When no one else chose to write about substance abuse, the topic remained on the back burner. Nonetheless, the topic came up as one of the central challenges and pressures youth felt they faced each time we considered future research agendas.

Helping Students Generate Ideas

Students who are used to writing impersonal expository themes may find it difficult to come up with topics or to dig into their own experience. For the novice, this phase can be painful and frustrating. Brainstorming topics can help, as can a technique called "clustering" (see Experiential Writing Activity Two).

Many available materials can help teachers and youth group leaders who wish to engage youth in personal reflection through writing

(see resource section for books and other materials). In addition, several excellent networks facilitate teacher training and dialogue about experiential writing (consult the resource section for full details about these networks). Prominent among these networks are the following:

- The National Writing Project, based at University of California at Berkeley. The project has over 144 sites nationwide and also operates in eight foreign countries.
- The Teachers and Writers Collaborative, based in New York City, publishes a catalogue of books on the teaching of writing and a newsletter "Teachers and Writers Magazine."
- The Breadloaf School of English, of the graduate English program of Middlebury College of Middlebury (VT), maintains a computer network for teachers' and students' writing and publishes a tri-annual newsletter on writing projects.

Activity 1: Scribe Writing

In general, making a start is a difficult phase in any writing project. Even very experienced authors understand this difficulty. Many people simply "go blank" when they confront an empty sheet of paper. This activity (scribe writing) and the next (clustering) are designed to help aspiring writers make a start at writing their own stories.

One important feature of Step by Step's process is that we affirm the value of the stories of every person involved, whatever their experience in school or level of academic knowledge. This point is important to us because so many of our participants are not actually proficient writers. In fact, this circumstance is familiar to many people who teach writing, and scribe writing is one way to deal effectively with it.

In scribe writing youth write through dictation, engaging an adult or peer scribe, or using interview techniques with each other, to capture stories that are more complex than they can communicate with limited writing skills. In fact, experiential writing has become an increasingly important component of adult literacy work as well.[11]

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[11]A particularly good description of a community writing and publishing project—in which participants develop their literacy skills—appears in *Opening Time*, a writing resource packet written by students in basic education and published by the Gatehouse Project in Manchester England. (See the resource list for more information.)

One of the best examples of scribe writing comes from Children's Express, a press service staffed by children and youth. Children's Express reporters are aged 8 to 13; its editors are older teens. All writing undertaken by Children's Express reporters and authors is done through the medium of audiotape, a technique they refer to as "oral journalism" (see resource section for further details).

Activity 2: Clustering

One of the great challenges in experiential writing is helping participants to make full use of the language and ideas they already have within them. On the one hand, scribe writing helps locate words lost within those paralyzed by the blank page.

But writing through conversation doesn't necessarily help people draw on the full range of words and images they have used to reflect on a particular experience. Clustering, a concept to which I was introduced through Mosaic's writer-in-residence, Katie Singer, helps participants, as individuals or as a group, recover their language through a written form of free association exercises.[12]

Participants are given a word around which to cluster other words or phrases that come to mind when focusing on that word. Katie asks her students to think of things that come in clusters—grapes, flowers, people—entities that are unique but have something fundamental in common. The key is to encourage a nonlinear form of association. As Katie (Singer, 1985, p. 5) has written, "Ideas come in clusters, too. They're not always organized, and they don't always make sense at first." The point is to help young people see that *their* ideas have unique connections and commonalities, a fact that is often not clear to them.

I usually put a word up on a blackboard or a piece of newsprint and ask people to throw out words that come to mind. Then I encourage participants to make their own clusters on the same word or theme. At the end of the exercise, participants should have a greater command of the language they have used to discuss a particular topic. They will

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[12]A succinct discussion of clustering is contained in Katie Singer's (1985) *A Teacher's Guide to Mosaic's 1984 Anthology, Coming of Age in Boston* (available in photocopy through Words Walking). Singer draws some of her ideas from Gabriele Lusser Rico's 1983 book, *Writing the Natural Way: A Course in Enhancing Creativity and Writing Confidence.* (See resource section for further details.)

probably also have jogged from their memories some of the particular details they would like to share.

See Figure 2 for two examples of clustering from a Step by Step workshop with young people in foster care. See Figure 3 for an example of how the clustering technique can be used to elaborate ideas—and as its own form of storytelling.

Figure 2. Clustering

I was feeling upset and confused. Not wanting to live with the guilt anymore. What guilt? I did not do anything wrong. Does she think so? Does she think I'm guilty? That I'm the cause for all of this?
I had to stop trying to please her
Was she willing to give me up for Jim?
find a reason
I was interfering with her marriage
What was she feeling?
WHY
What was going on when my mother was not talking to me? How was I feeling and what did I want to do?
I had to stop seeing her for a while, to think and to let her think too.
Jim was molesting me. (her husband)
Just stop talking to her when she stops talking to me.
I just wish I had threatened him one more time and then maybe everything would have been better
It is hard to face my family. I feel so wrong. Do they think so too?
How long would it be for?

—Holly Casper

Figure 3. Clustering.
When my mother was not talking to me

Activity 3: Dense Writing

Of course, autobiographical writing does not of itself constitute a *community* story. The focus of experiential writing within the community story tradition must reflect awareness of the connection between an individual's experience and the wider community or larger issue. Individuals are almost without exception tied in many ways to a wider community and to larger issues. Experiential writing in the community story tradition recognizes and exploits this fact.

In this tradition, then, the focus on community is very important. In this activity, I suggest ways to help students communicate the fabric of their culture and community in their own stories.

Powerful narrative, whether focused on the community or on the individual, is usually distinguished by the *depth* of its descriptions. Once beginning writers feel the power of their story to make a point, they can often forget to provide enough images to make the story real for the reader.

I often encourage writers to think of a photograph they would take of a particularly powerful moment. They can set the scene for their stories (or the scene for the particular incident within a longer story) by describing—densely, in compelling images—what that photograph would contain. Another technique effective with young writers is to suggest that they write about experiences as if they were describing them in a letter to a friend who had never seen where they lived.

Traditions of oral testimony are of course, the roots of experiential writing, and they are good sources of models for narrative structure. One of the most powerful examples of personal reflection and testimony is within the substance abuse recovery movement itself: the reflection and group story-sharing practice of Alcoholics Anonymous and other twelve-step traditions. Reading collections of testimony in AA-related journals and books, as well as attending an open meeting of AA or its affiliate programs can be one of the best ways for someone to begin to see how people follow the thread of substance abuse *within their own personal lives.*[13]

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[13]Discussions (and critiques) of Alcoholics Anonymous and other twelve-step programs are readily available through any library (consult the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*). In addition, most states have a toll-free number for information on local AA meetings. Call AA toll-free, 1-800-555-1212, for these state-specific numbers and for further information about AA.

Activity 4: The Writer as Outsider

In the act of experiential writing, writers of a community story also confront their topic as observers of their own lives and the life of their communities. In a sense, writing allows people to become a newcomer, an outsider, or a stranger to their own experience. Writing inevitably forces the writer to step back from the experiences as they happened. As writers become used to this process—a process of reflection—the ability to step back from direct experience can itself become a powerful intrinsic motive to write and think about life.

Writing about situations in which they have *genuinely* been the newcomer—a vacation, a move, a community service experience, or the first day of school—can also help the writer see the kind of detail and perspective they want to communicate to an audience.

This kind of exercise can be a good place to bring in materials by outsiders (and cultural natives) who have described the communities in which young people live. What views, in this circumstance, does the young person agree with? What is left out in the description of the community? What surprises does the account contain? What seems to reinforce stereotypes about the community or culture? This activity can be structured as an exercise on its own (a reflective narrative in its own right), or it can be included as a section of a longer piece.

The general principle, however, is that the very act of writing allows the writer to step out of the actual experience—its emotions, events, and circumstances—and to look at it in ways not possible during the experience itself. Appreciating this principle will help students improve as writers, of course, but it also allows them to develop a degree of detachment that has a value in reflecting on the day-to-day challenges that are a normal part of life.

Activity 5: A Letter to Myself

Reflections on the importance of the storytelling *process* to the students themselves—and of their changing relationship to particular experiences, their community and their culture—can be lost if a project focuses exclusively on a publicly shared end *product*. In keeping with the philosophy that the storytellers *must* have ultimate say in what is done with their stories, it is important to stress that the final audience might be the writers themselves.

One teacher I know suggests that, as a standard means of personal evaluation and reflection, students write letters to themselves at the beginning of a unit describing what they know about a subject, what

they would like to learn, and, in the case of autobiographical writing, what they think a particular experience *means* to them. The students then seal their letters and do not open them until they have written similar letters at the end of the unit. Then they compare the two letters to see what insights they have gained—expected and unexpected. [14]

Teachers and youth workers can extend this activity, if confidentiality can be assured, and the participants seriously want to publish a product. In this case, a forum or publication can be tremendously affirming for all involved. In oral history projects, young interviewers affirm the storyteller as teacher; in this case, they affirm themselves through a broader distribution of their work. Even if this result eludes the group, however, there are still opportunities—as this activity suggests—for young people to reflect about the impacts of their own stories and what they have learned in telling them.

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[14] Special thanks to Phyllis Owens of Welch High School in McDowell County, West Virginia, for this exercise.

Community Story Traditions, Part IV: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Participatory research, cultural journalism, and experiential writing are labels given to clusters of methods within the broader traditions of community storytelling. Each genre has its own emphasis and potential limitations.

Participatory research, as a movement, tends to focus on the politics of information. It deals with the effort to break down the perception that experts and professionals have a stranglehold on decisionmaking in many aspects of community life. Sometimes, however, a particular challenge to "intellectual hegemony" (or professional elitism) can itself obscure the importance of individual stories. Cultural journalism provides an alternative.

Cultural journalism brings people's cultural heritage back into classrooms and institutional arenas (such as treatment centers) that have sometimes ignored the importance of a community's history and traditions. But honoring our ancestors does not automatically lead us to the same respect for our own experience. Experiential writing provides such an opportunity.

Experiential writing highlights the individual. The danger, of course, is that such writing can ignore the historical or cultural context that surrounds individuals. But, placed within the tradition of community storytelling, experiential writing can help individuals connect their own stories to those of other people.

Any of the activities and project examples reported in this guidebook could be adapted to fit any of these three community storytelling traditions. Research into facts, for example, could be used as prewriting exercises for an autobiographical piece. Or, the opposite movement might take place: A first person narrative could become the cultural expression of participatory research.

In fact, most of the community- and school-based programs described in this guidebook actually transcend the lines that divide the

three traditions. I encourage fellow practitioners to delve into the resources provided at the end of this guidebook. Become more familiar with each of the traditions, and use whatever makes sense in fashioning your own work with young people.

Whatever our ideological and methodological distinctions, I believe we practitioners of these traditions share a profound sense of the connection between individuals' respect for their own experience and the power they will have in this world. No individual, however, achieves such things alone—and community storytelling traditions provide a framework in which teachers and youth workers can help young people make the connections that can empower them.

My own first community story project was the Appalachian Studies seminar I developed with six eleven- to sixteen-year-olds at the Big Laurel School. An early task, right out of Foxfire, was the compilation of home remedies. One teen listed Bayer Aspirin together with Goldenrod and Sassafras Tea. All of them were, after all, remedies she had at home—though her response was hardly what I had expected! It was *my* first lesson in not being "the expert."

As an inner-city classroom teacher I continued to fight the daily battle to keep listening. One young man fell asleep in school every day. He took a lot of drugs, but he was also working the nightshift to support his pregnant girlfriend. Working on a cultural journalism piece on young parenthood helped him sort out the complex effects that getting high and meeting family responsibilities had on his school performance.

In a brief magazine project that I advised in Aberdeen, Scotland, we couldn't keep correction fluid in our housing project office because of its demand as an inhalant (we also lost two tape recorders and a tea kettle in various break-ins.) I had little choice, however, but to accept the assertion that no drugs were involved from the two young men who recounted running back to the project with different explanations of seeing the aurora borealis (the northern lights): One thought it was the second coming, and the other was convinced that nuclear holocaust had begun. Sharing that story opened up a conversation on how those young men saw the world and why they used drugs to escape it.

And if I am ever tempted to think we, as adults, have figured out what we are doing in work with youth in high-risk situations in my current work, I have only to recall the young man turned off from AA as he sat in a room full of recovering addicts over 50, people whom he

would never see again, who were reading stories from a book that he didn't have. Too often, this is the circumstance we confront.

But we don't have to wait for rural- or ethnically- or age-appropriate materials on substance abuse to become available. The materials are there, within the youth we would reach, and within the communities where they live.

I offer this guidebook in the light of prevention of and recovery from substance abuse because I believe an *uninformed* "No" is not a *final* "No." The real war on drugs is won only when people fully realize they have other options, in both pleasure and despair. The rich work of community story projects—particularly those within rural, American Indian, and Alaska Native communities—demonstrate that the battle is doubly won when people can look to their culture not only for the roots of their problems, but for the strengths, values, and traditions upon which to build new lives.

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Additional Resources

The whole idea behind this guidebook is to help you help your students examine their lives with respect to the issue of substance abuse, and, equally important, to help them preserve and share that examination in written form. In such work, access to resources is critical; you need to make connections because you are helping your students make connections.

Resources are simply places you can turn to for help—people and organizations; ideas, inspiration, and opportunities; knowledge and reports of the experience of others. This section of *In Our Own Words* lists some of the most useful resources for helping youth engage in participatory research projects, cultural journalism, and experiential writing. These lists are by no means comprehensive, but they can help you get started in building the connections you and your students need.

Organizations, student- and community-produced publications, trade books, reference works, and opportunities for student publication are included. In the case of local organizations, or difficult-to-find resources, addresses and telephone numbers are also provided. Entries are organized by title of work or name of organization. To order commercially published books listed, consult *Books in Print* for list prices, publishers' addresses, and telephone numbers; or consult your local bookseller.

For the long-term, a useful resource is the ERIC database. It's the largest and most widely used educational database in the world, and it contains literally hundreds of thousands of documents about education, many of them available in paper copy from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Some of these materials are listed in this section of the *Guide*. ERIC also indexes the journal literature in education.

To order documents that are available from EDRS, simply place a toll-free call to EDRS: 1-800/443-3742. You'll need the ERIC Docu-

ment Reproduction Service order number for the document that interests you (for example, ED 328 388; ED numbers are printed in boldface in the lists that follow). EDRS staff can calculate the price for you, and you have the option of placing a credit-card order or a mail order. EDRS is located in Springfield, Virginia.

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (ERIC/CRESS)—publisher of this guidebook—can also help. Staff of the Clearinghouse will provide *free searches* of the ERIC database on topics that interest you. A toll-free call (1-800/624-9120 nationwide; or 1-800/344-6646 in WV) is all it takes. Just ask for "ERIC/CRESS User Services." Staff will help you define your topic and will perform the free search for you. You'll get the results within a week (in most cases). Call ERIC/CRESS for more information.

In addition, Words Walking, the community education and publications program of the Big Laurel Learning Center in West Virginia, maintains a Community Story Archive, which collects samples of community stories. To contribute to or receive information on the Community Story Archive, write to Words Walking, 659 Big Ugly Creek Rd. East, Leet, WV 25536.

Participatory Research

Organizations

The Highlander Research and Education Center is probably the single best resource for becoming familiar with participatory research (Route 3, Box 370, New Market, TN 37820 [Phone: 615/933-3443]). The Center was founded in 1932 by Myles Horton. Highlander continues to sponsor workshops for people involved with community issues; it is one of the mainstays of the international Participatory Research Network. "Highlander Reports" is the Center's quarterly newsletter; it includes updates and notices of upcoming events. Highlander also maintains a mail-order book service, which is probably the best source for community produced publications in North America. Related books include the following:

Highlander: No Ordinary School, 1932-1962 (1988), by John M. Glen. Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press

The Long Haul (1990), by Myles Horton, with Herbert and Judith Kohl. New York: Doubleday.

The Youth Policy Institute (1221 Massachusetts Ave, NW, Suite B, Washington, DC 20005 [202/638-2144]) publishes several journals that monitor policy and programs as they relate to youth. Substance abuse is among the topics covered.

Books

An Introduction to Participatory Research (1982).

Participatory Research Network. PR Series No. 3 New Delhi, India: International Council for Adult Education.

Protecting Youth from Alcohol and Substance Abuse: What Can We Do? (1989), by Robert L. Bennett and Nancy Gale. Washington, DC: Native American Development Corporation.

This pamphlet provides good descriptions about how to access different sectors of the community. Also, an excellent source of ideas for community education and action projects. Available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service. **(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 314 232).**

Other pamphlets in this series, also available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service, include:

Post-Traumatic Stress: What Some Indian Youth and Vietnam Veterans Have in Common (1990), edited by Nancy Gale. **(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 328 388).**

Blue Bay: A Tribal Approach to Fighting Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Our Way of Healing (1988), edited by Nancy Gale. **(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 328 389).**

Positive Self-Esteem Can Protect Native American Youth: How Can We Help? (1989), by Nancy Gale. **(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 328 385).**

Adolescence—A Tough Time for Indian Youth: What Can We Do? (1990), by Nancy Gale. **(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 326 340).**

Pass the Word: A Resource Booklet for the Native American Community Concerning New Concepts about Alcoholism (1990), by Nancy Gale. **(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 326 344).**

Strong Tribal Identity Can Protect Native American Youth: How Can We

Help? [1985], by Nancy Gale. **(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 329 391).**

Research, Education, Action: An Annotated Bibliography on Participatory Research and Popular Education (1985).

This annotated bibliography is available from the Participatory Research Group, 229 College St., Suite 309, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5T 1R4.

Journals

Network Notes: Participatory Research in North America

Notices of upcoming events, new publications and brief descriptions of programs. Published two to three times per year by The Highlander Center, Rt. 3 Box 370, New Market, TN 37820 (Phone: 615/933 3443).

Participatory Research

This journal was published by the Participatory Research Group (229 College St., Suite 309, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5T 1R4) until it was replaced by Network Notes (previous entry). Back issues are still available and worth tracking down for more extensive case studies.

Reference Works on Substance Abuse

Chocolate to Morphine (1983), by Andrew Weil and Winifred Rosen. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

Drug Consumer Safety Rules (1985), pamphlet by Mark A. Miller. (Mosier, OR: Mothers Against Misuse and Abuse). Order from MAMA, 2255 State Road, Mosier, OR 97040 (Phone: 503/298-1031).

Essential Guide to Non-Prescription Drugs (1983), by David R. Zimmerman. New York: Harper & Row.

Essential Guide to Prescription Drugs (1987), by James W. Long. New York: Harper & Row.

Physicians Desk Reference (updated annually), edited by Edward R. Barnhart. Oradell, NJ: Medical Economics.

A Primer of Drug Action (1985), by Robert Julien. New York: W.H. Freeman & Co.

Cultural Journalism

Student-Produced Journals and Other Works

Literally hundreds of Foxfire-inspired projects have sprung up across the United States and in other countries. The following list presents information about some of the more memorable projects.

Foxfire, published by Rabun County high school students, Rabun Gap, GA 30568.

This is the original, which continues to publish a quarterly magazine after nearly twenty five years. Heavy emphasis on traditional crafts and trades. Content of most of the earlier issues have been anthologized in ongoing series published by Anchor Press/Doubleday since 1972. Foxfire also publishes *Hands On*, a quarterly journal for cultural journalism projects, curriculum guides, and case studies of classroom projects from across the country. *Hands On* is abstracted by ERIC/CRESS.

I Ain't Lying, published by Mississippi: Cultural Crossroads, Box 89 ASU, Lorman, MS 39096.

Mantrip, published by students at Wheelwright High School, Wheelwright, KY 41669.

This journal directs particular attention to describing the human experience within the changing technological context of eastern Kentucky. It provides one of the better examples of cultural journalism taking on complex contemporary social issues.

Mosaic, published at South Boston High School from 1980 to 1990.

This journal provided a forum for youth concerns over several generations, particularly in the 1984 issue, *Coming of Age in Boston: Across the Generations*. A few originals and photocopies are available from Words Walking, 659 Big Ugly Creek Rd E., Leet, WV 25536.

Rural Organizing and Cultural Center (Rt. 4 Box 18, Lexington, MS 39095)

This organization has published two collections of youth research, *Bloodlines*, as well as a 1990 history of the civil rights movement entitled *Mind Stayed on Freedom*. This latter work has also been published in paperback by Westview Press, Boulder, CO.

Salt (Contact Pam Wood, Box 30, Kennebunkport, ME 04046)

Salt is one of the original and most successful programs inspired by Foxfire. In the last decade the journal has been produced by students who are part of a special "Maine semester" program, developed in collaboration with six New England universities.

Books

The Cama-i Book (1983), edited by Ann Vick. New York: Anchor Press/ Doubleday.

Foxfire Reconsidered by John L. Puckett (1989). Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

This book is a detailed evaluation of Foxfire by an outsider. It considers the origins of Foxfire, the issues surrounding and the effects of the work of Wigginton and his students in the local context, and the wider implications of the Foxfire experience for American education generally.

First Person America (1980), edited by Ann Banks. New York: Knopf.

This book is a collection of 80 life histories taken during the 1930s by the Federal Writer's Project.

Making Education Relevant for Contemporary Indian Youth: A Handbook for Cultural Curriculum Developers Focusing on American Indian Tribes and Canadian First Nations (1991 Edition), by Anita Chisholm, Barbara Laquer, Duane Hale, Ravi Sheorey, and Art McConville, Jr. Norman, OK: The American Indian Institute, The University of Oklahoma.

This guide provides information about multicultural education curriculum, teaching strategies, rules for good writing, how to conduct interviews, how to document resources, some sample lessons, and much more.

Remembering America: A Sampler of the WPA American Guide Series (1985), edited by Archie Hobson. New York: Columbia University Press.

Several of the individual state guides produced in the WPA project have been republished by Pantheon Books.

Books by Studs Terkel (all published in New York by Pantheon Books):

Division Street America (1967)

Working (1974)

American Dreams: Lost and Found (1980)

The Good War (1984)

Hard Times (1986)

The Great Divide: Second Thoughts on the American Dream (1988)

Sometimes a Shining Moment: The Foxfire Experience (1985), by Eliot Wigginton. New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday.

You and Aunt Arie (1975), by Pam Wood.

Now out of print, this how-to-book by the founder of the Salt project and former Foxfire staff member, remains available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service **(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 120 090).**

Works Specifically Related to Substance Abuse

The Emerging Eagle is a journal published by the Rural Community Action Program (RurAL CAP), Inc., Alcohol Program, P.O. Box 200908, Anchorage, AK 99520 (907/279-2511, outside Alaska; and 1-800/478-7227 in Alaska).

The Four Worlds Development Project (University of Lethbridge, 4401 University Drive, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada T1K 3M4 403/329-2184) has a lengthy list of publications, workshops, curricula and films including:

Handbook for Effective School-Based Prevention Programs (1988), by Julie Bopp.

Taking Time to Listen: Using Community-Based Research to Build Programs (1985), by Julie and Michael Bopp.

Developing Healthy Communities: Fundamental Strategies for Health Promotion (1985), by Michael Bopp.

How History Has Affected Native Life Today (1984). (Adult Education Series)

The Four Worlds staff also recommend the following work:

Kids and Drinking (1981), by Anne Snyder. Minneapolis, MN: Compcare Publications.

This book contains the stories of three adolescents who become addicted to alcohol at a very young age and eventually start their recovery through Alcoholics Anonymous.

Experiential Writing

Experiential Writing Opportunities

Brian Maracle, 178 Hawthorne Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1S OB5 (Phone: 613/234 9620) has called for stories for a book about Native people and alcohol. Maracle is a Mohawk journalist who formerly wrote for *The Globe and Mail* and hosted the CBC radio program "Our Native Land."

Breadloaf is another possible outlet for students' work. Contact *Breadloaf News*, Leslie Owens, English Department, Clemson University, Clemson, SC 29634. To find out about programs or workshops contact the Breadloaf School of English, Tilden House, Middlebury College, Middlebury, VT 05753.

The Children's Express (245 7th Avenue, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10001-7302 [Phone: 212/620-0098]) is a press service produced by children. Reporters can be as old as age 13; editors are older teenagers. This organization has a nationally syndicated column; it has produced spots for morning national news shows; and it also produces a TV series on PBS. In addition, the organization publishes a journal, *The Children's Express Quarterly*, which welcomes submissions from children eight to thirteen. The spring 1990 issue of the quarterly included several pieces on substance abuse.

Words Walking (659 Big Ugly Creek Rd E., Leet, WV 25536) has issued a call for stories on substance abuse and has a continuing interest in receiving manuscripts from young writers.

Organizations

Gatehouse Project in Manchester, England, has published several dozen pamphlets of autobiographical writing dictated to "scribes" and handwritten by adult literacy students. Gatehouse has also published *Opening Time*, a writing resource packet developed by students in basic education programs. (Gatehouse materials are avail-

able in the U.S. from the Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers and through Words Walking.)

Hale House (68 Edgecombe Avenue, New York, NY 10030) is the program inspired by Mother Hale, who takes in drug-addicted babies and, more recently, those affected by AIDS. Hale House also publishes a newsletter, *The Mainliner*.

Literacy Volunteers of America (5795 Widewaters Parkway, Syracuse, NY 13214-1846 [Phone: 315/445-8000]). Affiliates of the national organization exist throughout the nation; most state affiliates have toll-free telephone numbers.

The National Writing Project (School of Education, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720). The National Writing Project publishes a journal, *The Quarterly*.

New Youth Connections: The Newsmagazine Written by and for New York Youth (135 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011 [Phone: 212/242-3270]) deals with issues of substance abuse. For example, see especially "Crack: Dealer's Dream, Teen's Nightmare" (in the May 1986 issue) and "Smoking: Slow Death at 16" (in the April 1987 issue).

Step by Step (659 Big Ugly Creek Rd. E., Leet, WV 25536 [Phone: 304/855 8557]) is a creative expression and leadership development program for West Virginia youth. It is cosponsored by Action Youth Care, an agency that works with young people in the child welfare system and their families, and by Words Walking, the community publications program of the Big Laurel Learning Center.

Teachers and Writers Collaborative (5 Union Square West, New York, NY 10003 [Phone: 212/691-6590]). The Collaborative publishes a newsletter, "Teachers and Writers Magazine."

Youthnet: The Youth Services Telecommunication Cooperative is a computer network that is run by the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services (1400 I Street, NW, Suite 330, Washington, DC 20005 [Phone: 202/682 4114]). They sponsor a story and idea bulletin board from which *Sounds from the Streets: A Collection of Poems, Stories, and Art Work by Young People*, a collection of youth writing to be published in 1991.

Books

Active Voice: A Writing Program Across the Curriculum (1981), by James Moffett. Upper Montclair, NJ: Boynton/Cook Publishers. Contains three groups of assignments (inner speech and composed

reflection, dialogs and dialogs converted into essays, and converting narrative into essay).

Active Voices (1986), by James Moffett. Upper Montclair, NJ: Boynton/Cook Publishers. (This series consists of three different books for grade levels 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12).

In the Middle: Writing, Reading and Learning with Adolescents (1987), by Nancy Atwell. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books (70 Court Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801)

Write to Learn (1987), by Donald M. Murray. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

Writing to Be Read (1976), by Ken Macrorie. Rochelle Park, NJ: Hayden Book Company.

Writing the Natural Way: A Course in Enhancing Creativity and Writing Confidence (1983), by Gabriele Lusser Rico. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

A Teacher's Guide to Mosaic's 1984 Anthology, Coming of Age in Boston (1985), by Katie Singer. Boston: Mosaic. Out of print, but available in photocopy through Words Walking.

Katie Singer also recommends the following for raising issues of substance abuse:

The Late Great Me (1980), by Sandra Scoppetone. New York: Bantam. A first-person novel about a teenaged alcoholic who eventually joins AA.

Doing Drugs (1983), by Bruce and Michael Jackson. New York: St. Martin's Press. A collection of candid interviews conducted by a suburban New York teenager with his friends; the interviews were edited by his father.

About the Author

Michael Tierney directs the Step by Step and Words Walking programs and has also coordinated community publications and workshops in Boston (as founding director of Mosaic, 1980-1987), Scotland, and Nicaragua. He lives with his wife Marcelle St. Germain and their son Luke at Family Worker Farm, a community in the Catholic Worker tradition at 659 Big Ugly Creek Road, East, Leet, WV 25536 (Phone: 304/855-8557).